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ABSTRACT

This study examines the accomplishments of four women who served as deans of women, a once-crucial but now defunct role, in U.S. coeducational institutions in the South. Their contributions are assessed by examining five areas: institutions, impediments, initiatives, infrastructure, and intimacy. Surveying the careers of Sarah Gibson Blanding, Katherine S. Bowersox, Agnes Ellen Harris, and Adele H. Stamp, who were conscious of their marginality compared to more-recognized female leaders of academe, the book examines a little-studied era in women's higher education; it examines the significance of deans of women as academic advocates and actors, Southern academic women in co-educational institutions, and academic women who remained single. Separate chapters focus on the education and early work experience of the four women; their struggle for physical space on male-dominated campuses; their response to financial challenges during the Great Depression; their efforts to combine academic societies and ritual for college women, to enhance athletic opportunities, and to foster professional outlets for themselves and their colleagues; and on how single academic women fulfill family responsibilities and forge personal relationships. Appended are chapter endnotes and a list of primary sources. (Contains approximately 200 references.) (RH)